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SRI K. VINAYAKAM :—" Arising out of the answer given by the Hon. the Minister for Agriculture that all these Block Development Officers are given the status of a Gazetted Officer, may I know whether it is a fact that the Block Development Officer who is in charge of the Tirukkuzhankundram block is only a non-gazetted officer? "

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" I would like to point out to the hon. Member that this question relates to National Extension Service and his supplementary question relates to Community Projects."

SRI K. VINAYAKAM :—" Is he not a Community Project Officer? "

SRI K. P. GOPALAN :—" Are the Government aware that some Block Development Officers in Malabar are utilising their appointment for the strengthening of political parties? If so, will the Government be pleased to issue orders that they should not side with any political party in the interests of the successful working of the scheme? "

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" The hon. Member was at Payyanoor when I went there and I received a written representation to which I referred to when I spoke there. Rather the complaint was that these Block Development Officers were anti-Congress and pro-Communist and pro-Socialist. But I discount such criticisms and comments. I have found and I have no doubt the hon. Member is quite satisfied that the Block Development Officer there is doing his work very successfully."

SRI M. JAGANNATHAN :—" In view of the fact that there is a general complaint and widespread discontent among the Harijans that they are not properly represented in the appointments relating to either the Community Projects or the National Extension Service, may I know whether any Harijans have been appointed as Block Development Officers? "

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" I do not know whether there is any discontent nor do I understand this kind of discontent among the Harijans in the matter of selection of a few officers who have the aptitude for doing work. But still if any Harijan suitable for this post is available, the Government would certainly consider the case whenever there is any vacancy."

Death of certain pavement dwellers during rainy days in Madras.

* 686 *Q.*—SRI A. RATNAM : Will the Hon. the Minister for Health be pleased to State—

(*a*) whether it is a fact that 30 pavement dwellers died on the platforms of Madras City during the heavy rains in the month of October 1953 ;

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(*b*) whether the dead bodies were removed for post-mortem examination and what the result of the examination was as to the cause of their deaths; and

(*c*) whether the Government have taken any steps to give shelter to such dwellers at least on such rainy days?

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" (*a*) Fifteen pavement dwellers are reported to have died on the platforms of the Madras City in October 1953. It is not possible to say how many of them died during heavy rains.

" (*b*) No post-mortem examination of the dead bodies was conducted, as all of them died of natural causes.

" (*c*) There is no such proposal."

SRI V. BALAKRISHNAN :—" Have the Government taken any steps to find out wherefrom these pavement-dwellers come and why they come and what steps have they taken to grapple with those reasons? "

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" About 2,000 families are supposed to be dwelling on these pavements. Wherefrom they come I do not know. Probably some of them come from Pudukkottai."

SRI M. NARAYANA KURUP :—" May I know whether the Government spent any amount on these unfortunate victims while they were alive and whether they spent any amount after they were dead to have their bodies buried? "

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" Their bodies are disposed of in the proper way. The Corporation have formulated a building scheme. They have submitted their scheme to the Government of India and that scheme is intended to provide for the slum-dwellers and also the pavement-dwellers."

SRI S. DEIVASIGAMANY :—" Do the Government realise that the existence of these pavement-dwellers throughout the City is a blot on and shame to the City of Madras and what are the steps that the Government are taking to remove this unseemly sight? "

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" The Government are satisfied that the Corporation have a scheme for providing dwellings for these people."

SRI S. RAMALINGAM :— " இறந்தவர்கள் சவ அடக்கத்திற்கு எந்த மதச் சடங்குகளைக் கையாளுகிறார்கள் என்று சர்க்கார் சொல்லுவார்களா? " (சிரிப்பு.)

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" I suppose most of them are buried."

SRI T. C. NARAYANAN NAMBIAR :—" Is it a fact that the amount spent to bury the dead bodies of these victims is more than the amount spent to give shelter and food to these people when alive? "

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THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" The hon. Gentleman may make his own calculations. I have no idea about it."

SRI S. R. ARUMUGAM :—" மழை காலங்களில் நடை பாதைகளில் வசிக்கக்கூடிய குழந்தைகளையும் தாய்மார்களையுமாவது ஒரு நல்ல இடத்தில் வைப்பதற்கு சர்க்கார் முன் வருவார்களா ? "

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" I have already told the House about the scheme of the Corporation, which this State has forwarded to the Government of India with its recommendation."

SRI K. VINAYAKAM :—" In the absence of a suitable scheme with the Government to house these pavement-dwellers in the City of Madras, the Corporation of Madras have evolved their own scheme which they have forwarded to the Government of India. Is it not a fact that when this scheme was forwarded to the Madras Government, the Madras Government refused to give their share of subsidy and that they asked the Corporation to revise the scheme and then only to wait in deputation on the Central Government for the entire subsidy? "

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" The Madras Government have recommended that Rs. 65 lakhs may be given for the scheme in the first year. A portion of this amount is supposed to be met by the Madras Government."

SRI M. NARAYANA KURUP :—" Is it the contention of the Government that the duty of looking after these destitutes is cast only on the local bodies and that the function of the Government is confined only to looking after the welfare of well-to-do people? "

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" It is the duty of the local bodies to provide for such people in cities and towns. In the rural areas the Government have to provide for the houseless people."

SRI C. RAJAM RAMASAMI :—" Has any census of these pavement-dwellers been taken? "

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY :—" I said that the approximate number was 2,000 families. This is the information I got from the Commissioner of the Corporation this morning."

Construction of an Upper Bhavani Dam in Coimbatore district.

* 687 *Q.*—SRI N. K. PALANISAMI : Will the Hon. the Minister for Public Works be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether any plan was formulated in 1926 for the construction of an Upper Bhavani Dam in Coimbatore district ;